/28 cont./

862 673 their share of food, they quickly eat theirs and wait till the mother is not there to snatch the share of a younger or weaker brother by force, by stealth, by deception, by false promises, or by coercion in some form, such as threatening to reveal to the parents some misdeed not known to them.

862 261 In general, the growing Guajiro child is never satisfied with the amount of food he gets, and in his craving for more he places no normal restraint on his appetite. He is always capable of eating more than he can normally hold, even to the point of suffering, in the hope of building up a reserve or because, feeling himself undernourished, he finds pleasure and satisfaction in eating to repletion. He always eats as if he were starving, which sometimes is the case, but at other times is only the remembrance of past hunger and the fear of its repetition.

Parents believe that the habit of these small thefts may lead to bigger robberies from people not relatives, which would bring about a series of troubles to the family group to which the young delinquent belongs. Also, the food stolen may be necessary and even indispensable for home use, and the theft means that an adult, a sick relative, or a visitor whom they wish or need to look after is deprived of it. One has to bear in mind that in certain parts of the country the sources of food supplies are so few that food is scrupulously rationed to last out until new supplies become available.

Children are also punished as their parents want them to behave abstemiously and uncomplainingly during the long spells of scarcity so frequent in this country, /29/ although they have their reward later when, in time of abundant harvest, food is plentiful and extravagantly used, only sufficient seed being retained for the next sowing. During these times of scarcity the Guajiro lives on a very reduced food ration and puts up with hunger and thirst to an incredible degree, and mothers want their children to achieve a similar standard: to behave like adults in such circumstances.

862 574 A further motive for correction and punishment is when the child refuses to share the food that has been given to him or that